

## **Confidentiality and Title I**

### **Purpose:**

This instruction sets forth the policy to authorize school officials to cooperate with education officials collecting data for Title I purposes.

### **Scope:**

Sponsors participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP).

### **Description:**

Under current policy, school food service officials may release aggregate information about the number of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals. School food service officials are now authorized to disclose the names of individual children, who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals, to officials collecting data for Title I allocation and evaluation purposes. While the release of this information is now authorized, the final decision rests with local officials.

For allocation of funds under Title I, public schools are usually ranked according to the number of children eligible for free and reduced-price schools meals as an annual indicator of the socioeconomic status of the school's attendance area. While Title I funds are not dispersed to private schools, children from the attendance area who attend private schools may still be included in the total count of needy children living in the attendance area. Private schools that participate in the school nutrition programs may release the addresses, grade levels, and eligibility status of children determined eligible for free and reduced-price schools meals to Title I officials. It should be noted that private schools would not need to release the name of free and reduced-price eligible students, since addresses are sufficient to determine attendance areas.

While in some instances aggregate release of free and reduced-price school meals information is sufficient, food service officials may be asked to provide the names and eligibility status of individual children for Title I evaluation purposes. School food service officials may therefore cooperate with education officials for evaluation of Title I services.

**SOURCE:** MEMORANDUM FROM THERESA E. BOWMAN, REGIONAL DIRECTOR, CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE.